



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
MARINE FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

FEB 25 2004

Honorable Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr.
Vice-Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)
Under Secretary of Commerce for
Oceans and Atmosphere
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Admiral Lautenbacher:

I am writing to report to you on the recent meeting of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC), held in New York City, New York, December 9-11, 2003. This meeting was one of the most productive and comprehensive meetings MAFAC has held since the new membership appointed by Secretary Evans first met in January 2003.

Briefly, MAFAC discussed a number of key issues anticipated to be priorities for fisheries and ocean policy in the coming years. These include improving guidelines to prevent overfishing, reducing overcapacity in U.S. fisheries, improving recreational fisheries data, identifying the scope of issues under ecosystem-based management, developing an aquaculture policy, and initiating a collaborative effort between the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) and the National Sea Grant Program for implementing public outreach plans under the National Bycatch Strategy.

We enjoyed receiving a presentation by Ms. Bonnie Morehouse of your staff and hope through the Planning, Programming and Budget System; NOAA will be supportive of this collaborative initiative between Fisheries and Sea Grant.

Our next meeting is scheduled for August 10-12, 2004, in Juneau, Alaska. Sea Grant will be invited to participate in our discussions and advisory recommendations addressing aquaculture, bycatch implementation and improved data collection in recreational fisheries. In addition, ecosystem-based management will be reviewed and discussed with an emphasis on the need to integrate protected resource issues.

On behalf of MAFAC, I want to take this opportunity to extend our invitation for you to attend and participate in this meeting. As you are the Chairman of this Advisory Committee, we would very much like the opportunity to receive your thoughts and

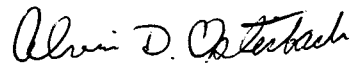


direction on how we can best serve you and your efforts with Dr. Hogarth to fulfill the mission of NOAA.

Per the operating procedures governing this Advisory Committee, I have attached our Committee's meeting report for your review and forwarded a copy to the Secretary. All of our recent reports can be viewed on our web page maintained by NOAA Fisheries at www.nmfs.noaa.gov.

We look forward to continuing to serve you and your Administration in our mutual objective to sustain the nations living marine resources.

Sincerely,



Alvin D. Osterback
Industry Vice Chair,
Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee

Attachment

cc: Dr. William T. Hogarth, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, (Co-Chair MAFAC)
Donald Evans, Secretary, Department of Commerce

ATTENDEES:

All MAFAC Members except John Forster & Ken Roberts
Laurie Allen, Director, Office of Protected Resources
Jack Dunnigan, Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries
Gordon Helm, Deputy Director, Office of Constituent Services
Bill Hogarth, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
Rebecca Lent, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs
Richard Methot, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Northwest Regional Office
Rollie Schmitt, Director, Office of Habitat Conservation

GUEST PARTICIPANTS:

Antoinette Clemetson, New York Sea Grant Extension Specialist, Cornell Univ.
Mary Hope-Katsouros
Bill Merrill
Jim Murray, Director, National Sea Grant Extension Program
Paul Sandifer, NOS, Charleston, S.C., Commissioner, National Oceans Commission

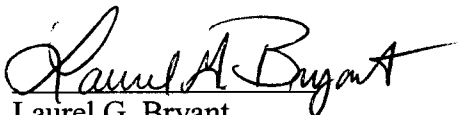
PUBLIC:

Steven Sloan

STAFF:

Laurel Bryant, Designated Federal Officer, Office of Constituent Services, NMFS
Judy Bowie, Office of Constituent Services

Respectfully Submitted



Laurel G. Bryant
Designated Federal Officer
MAFAC, National Marine Fisheries Service
February 24, 2004